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REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 21-31 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Battas, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,757,689), hereinafter referred to as Battas, in view of Matoba, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,231,567), hereinafter referred to as Matoba. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection based on the following discussion.

The Office Action proposes that Battas teaches pushing inventory information to an electronic catalog upon the occurrence of an "event" (column 22, lines 53-65). Battas does not teach that this event can comprise capacity buckets becoming full or empty. In light of this deficiency, the Office Action makes reference to Matoba as disclosing a materials requirement planning (MRP) process that does capacity scheduling. Then, the Office Action concludes that the MRP process described in Matoba could be the event that triggers the push of inventory information discussed in Battas.

However, Applicants note that Matoba does not utilize the filling or emptying of a capacity bucket as an event that will trigger a change in the predicted lead time. To the contrary, Matoba only observes a change in the predicted lead times when a lead time prediction is specifically requested, or when production schedules are changed. In other words, while Matoba discusses the concepts of capacity planning, there is no indication in Matoba that the emptying or filling of a capacity constraint would trigger any type of activity relating to predicting production

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lead times. To the contrary, the production lead times are only calculated when a change is made (such as changing production capacity) or when a specific request is made to the MRP regarding the current status of production lead times. This is contrary to the claimed invention which utilizes the filling or emptying of a capacity bucket as the trigger for pushing information to the electronic catalog.

As mentioned above, Matoba calculates lead times only when requested, or when parameters are changed. For example, in column 4, lines 14-20, Matoba explains that a planner can input a lead time estimation command, in response to which the system calculates a prediction for the lead time. Similarly, in column 5, lines 1-10, Matoba describes that the lead time estimating module predicts lead times in response to MRP execution commands. Further, the updating of the lead time prediction that is described in column 9, lines 6-15 is performed only in response to an adjustment of a production schedule that changes the production capacity (column 8, lines 31-33).

Thus, Matoba only discloses making a prediction of lead times in response to an external request for lead time predictions. Matoba does not monitor the status of capacity ranges and does not self-generate any indication when a capacity range becomes full or empty. This is directly contrary to the invention which bases the timing of when to push information precisely upon when capacity buckets become full (or mostly fall) or empty (or mostly empty). Therefore, Applicants submit that Matoba does not contain any form of trigger that would send "a push signal to said catalog when a capacity bucket of a product reaches a specified level" as defined by independent claims 1 and 31, "sending a push signal to said catalog when a capacity bucket of a

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product becomes full and when said capacity bucket of said product becomes empty" as defined by independent claim 21, or "sending a push signal to said catalog only when a capacity bucket of a product comes within a predetermined percentage of full and when said capacity bucket of said product comes within a predetermined percentage of empty" as defined by independent claim 26.

As shown above, Battas is argued as providing the ability to push inventory information to an electronic catalog upon the occurrence of an "event." However, Battas does not teach or suggest that this "event" corresponds to the filling or emptying of capacity buckets. As explained above, Matoba similarly does not provide any form of trigger when a capacity range becomes full or empty and, instead, Matoba only performs lead time predictions when requested to do so. Therefore, it is Applicant's position that the proposed combination of Battas and Matoba does not teach or suggest "sending a push signal to said catalog when a capacity bucket of a product reaches a specified level" as defined by independent claims 1 and 31, "sending a push signal to said catalog when a capacity bucket of a product becomes full and when said capacity bucket of said product becomes empty" as defined by independent claim 21, or "sending a push signal to said catalog only when a capacity bucket of a product comes within a predetermined percentage of full and when said capacity bucket of said product comes within a predetermined percentage of empty" as defined by independent claim 26.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 21, 26, and 31 are patentable over the proposed combination of references. Similarly, dependent claims 2-5, 22-25, and 27-30 are similarly patentable, not only because they depend from a patentable independent claim, but also because

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of the additional features of the invention they define. In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.
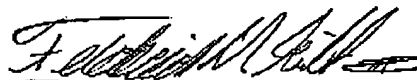
In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-5 and 21-31, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary.

Please charge any deficiencies and credit any overpayments to Attorney's Deposit Account Number 50-0510.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 8-8-05

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